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Key Probe Figure Resigns High Position in Korea

Medley

EX-ENVOY KIM OUT AFTER HOUSE VOTES AID CUTOFF

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Washington Star Staff Writers

A key figure in the dispute between the United States and South Korea that led to the House voting to cut off food aid resigned his job in Seoul today with an angry blast at the U.S. Congress.

Reports from the Korean capital said Kim Dong Jo, former ambassador to Washington, submitted his resignation as an adviser to President Park Chung Hee and it was ac-

cepted. Kim had been a special assistant to Park for foreign affairs since December 1975.

Kim was Korea's ambassador here from 1967 to 1973. Congress wants to question him on possible wrongdoing by some of its members as part of the investigation of reported Korean influence buying here.

KIM'S RESIGNATION came just a day after the House voted to cut off \$56 million in economic assistance aid to South Korea in retaliation for

the Korean government's refusal to make Kim available to answer questions about allegations that he bribed congressmen while ambassador.

The resignation was seen here as Park's reaction to the vote, possibly beginning to clear the way for an attempt to check a deterioration in relations between the two allies.

The South Korean news agency Haptong reported from Seoul that after resigning Kim denounced Congress for "using high-handed meth-

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ods to impose their own demands on us." He indignantly accused Congress of affronting his personal dignity as well as South Korean prestige.

Haptong said Kim indicated that although he could not answer congressional questions while a presidential assistant, he would be available to Congress as a private citizen.

KOREA HAD AGREED to submit written questions from House investigators to Kim about his payments of cash in plain white envelopes to congressmen, according to Leon Jaworski, special counsel to the House committee probing influence-buying on Capitol Hill.

But Jaworski told the House the offer was unacceptable because South Korean officials refused to assure him that Kim's answers "would be forthright and not evasive."

"In brief, there has been no substantial indication of cooperation," Jaworski wrote to House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill Jr. on June 19 after a meeting with current South Korean ambassador, Kim Yong Shik.

The House, which last month voted 321-46 to warn President Park to



KIM DONG JO
Ex-ambassador out of job

cooperate with Jaworski or run the risk of economic retaliation, voted yesterday, 273-125, to cut \$56 million out of the 1979 agriculture appropriations bill for Food for Peace sales credits to South Korea, essentially cutting off economic assistance to Seoul.

It was money from rice sales commissions under the same Food for Peace program that millionaire rice merchant Tongsun Park used to

channel \$850,000 in payments and contributions to 30 current and former members of Congress.

THE SOUTH KOREAN offer to submit written questions to Kim apparently was made after the House's May 31 vote. Previously, Seoul officials had offered to have Kim telephone O'Neill to discuss the case, an offer that was flatly rejected.

The Korean Embassy called yesterday's House vote "regrettable" and said South Korea "has refused to be coerced into violating international legal order and its dignity as a sovereign state."

"This action is particularly regrettable in that it ignores the cooperation the Republic of Korea already has extended to the executive and legislative branches of the government of the United States in their investigation of alleged improprieties," the embassy said.

"It also ignores the talks that were continuing as a serious effort by (South Korea) to resolve outstanding questions to the mutual satisfaction of the concerned parties," a reference to the continuing negotiations with Jaworski.

THE AMENDMENT to the agriculture bill yesterday was sponsored by House Democratic Leader Jim Wright of Texas, who said the "honor

and integrity" of the House were at stake in clearing up the cloud the South Korean scandal has left over Congress.

It also was strongly supported by House Republican Leader John Rhodes of Arizona, who called Kim's testimony "vital." He said, "the actions of the government of South Korea in this instance are not being true to the friendship that we had."

Rhodes, however, also made public a letter he has sent to Jaworski saying he was "surprised and shocked" to learn the special counsel "has retreated from your oft-stated position that any testimony from Ambassador Jo (Kim) must be under oath."

"If you have indeed abandoned this position, it seems to me that you have abandoned any hope of receiving meaningful testimony from Ambassador Jo (Kim)," Rhodes said. He said he was re-examining what has been his strong support for Jaworski's efforts.

Meanwhile, the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct yesterday spent its third day reviewing information Jaworski has collected on congressmen connected with Tongsun Park's attempt to buy influence. The committee announced no conclusions, and was scheduled to meet again today.